



Meet Elizabeth Neptune

Liz Neptune is the Director of the Indian Township Health Center at Indian Township, Maine, one of two Passamaquoddy reservations. When Liz first became Director in 1996, the average age of death for Passamaquoddy people was 44 years old. Today, it's 48—that's progress, but not enough, according to Liz. "Our people deserve to live longer and healthier lives, and I want to make life better for Indian people—it's always been a dream of mine."

When Liz was a young girl, she began work at the then Indian Township Clinic through a summer youth employment program. That one summer quickly turned into an extra half year of working at the clinic. Still very much interested in health care, Liz went

on to the University of Maine to study medical technology. She soon realized that medical technology was not the field that would help her fulfill her dream of "making life better" for Indian people. So, she switched her major to Health Administration and soon began her directorship at the Health Center.

Liz is most proud of the Health Center's innovative programs—they are based on community and family needs. One of her favorite programs is called "Kmiqutahasultipon" in Passamaquoddy, or "We Remember" in English. This health program is based on Passamaquoddy values and is geared towards children with special needs and their families. A "strength-based" program, it helps children and families build on the things they do well, which in turn, helps them to become stronger and healthier families. Today, "We Remember" is a model health program used across the United States.

With all that Liz does at the Health Center, she still keeps family as a high priority in her life: "But not just my family, but the families of the future—they are our future, too, and that is why I do this work." Liz lives with her husband and children in Indian Township.